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WEEKLY VISITANT.

"OURS ARE THE PLANS OF FAIR DELIGHTFUL PEACE,
"UNWARP'D BY PARTY RAGE, TO LIVE LIKE BROTHERS."

SALEM—SATURDAY EVENING DECEMBER 20, 1806.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

MR. ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

[Concluded.]

About the year 1784, a question was agitated among the journeymen shoemakers, whether those who had learned the business without having been apprenticed, could be allowed to follow the trade. This dispute did not regard masters, but journeymen. Mr. Chamberlayn, of Cheapside, who employed our two brothers took an active part against the men, and carried it so far as to discharge all those of his workmen who joined these clubs. This greatly exasperated them against him, and they immediatly commenced a search among the remainder of his men, who were what they termed *unlawful*. Robert Blomfield was one of these, and him they soon singled out, threatening to prosecute his master for employing him, and his brother for teaching him. George, by no means of a passive temper, finding himself threatened and insulted for having refused to join their meetings defied and resisted them. He addressed a letter to the most active man of their committee, stating that, in taking Robert, he acted in conjunction with the feelings of a brother and the wishes of a mother. He made extremely free with the private character (a very indifferent one) of this man, and also with the views of the committee. This remonstrance widened the breach between him and them, and things became still worse. The mild nature of Robert revolted from this troublesome and contentious scene. He saw, with extreme concern, the storm that was gathering over his brother's head, and his tenderness for his brother induced him to use the most effectual means to avert it. This was by withdrawing himself, and, consequently, the objection, from the place of action. He therefore begged leave of his brother to retire, for a time, into the country and to which he gave his assent. He accordingly returned home, and, at the desire of Mr. Austin, resided at his house during his stay. He remained at Sapiston two months, and here, with his mind glowing with the beauties of Thomson, and now heightened with the presence of rural scenery, did he again retrace those peaceful, living fields, where he first began to think; where he first imbibed the knowledge of nature and the soul of poetry. Here, free from the smoke, the noise, and the

contention of the city, did he again repace the paths of rural simplicity; again read over, with renewed ardour, the beauteous volume of Nature, and once more inspire that love of pastoral innocence, that perfected him for the production of the Farmer's Boy.

The question still remaining undecided, Robert, at the expiration of two months, left those scenes so dear to him, and returned to London, where, to avoid farther trouble he, at the offer of a Mr. Dudbridge, apprenticed himself to that worthy man, George paying five shillings by way of form, as premium. Mr. Dudbridge, was their landlord, and a freeman of the city of London. He acted most honorably, taking no advantage of his indentures, but leaving Robert, who remained with his brother till he could work as expertly as himself, as free as ever.

When our Poet had attained the age of nineteen, his brother left London, and went to settle at Bury. Here we cannot forbear expressing our admiration at this young man. His love was, indeed, brotherly, and amounting even to heroism. He took the little orphan, when a boy, and during the years he remained with him, was at once his father, master, brother, friend! Nor did he quit him until he had amply qualified him to support himself by honest and independant industry. Left to himself, and perhaps feeling a chasm in his mind at the loss of his brother, he paid his court to another sister of the Muses, and spent his leisure hours in the study of music. His attention was rewarded with suceess, and he became a pretty good performer on that most difficult of instruments, the violin. But another mistress soon engaged his heart, and our poet, for once inconstant, deserted the Muse, Euterpe, for Mary Ann Church, a comely young woman, of Woolwich, whose father was a boat-builder of that town. This connection he gained through the medium of his brother Nathaniel, who had married a person of the same place.

It was some years before he could rescue himself from the burthensome expence of ready furnished lodgings. At length, by incessant toil at his business, he was enabled to purchase a bed of his own; and, thus enriched, he hired a room up one pair of stairs, at No. 14, Bell Alley, Coleman Street; his landlord, at the same time permitting him to sit and work in a light garret, two pair of stairs higher.

This garret was the Parnassian temple, whence issued the poem of the Farmer's Boy. It was here, at his work, without the aid of pen, ink, paper, pencil, or slate, or any other assistant to the memory, and amid the noise and hammering of six or seven workmen, that he conceived the beautiful imagery, the faithful delineation, and the harmonic and grateful flow of verse, that complete the Farmer's Boy. The fruits of his creative fancy did he treasure up in his memory till convenience or opportunity enabled him to transmit them to paper; and, to the astonishment of the literati, the latter part of his *Autumn*, and the whole of his *Winter*, was composed and corrected in his head, without a single line being committed to paper. "And thus," said he to a friend, "when it was thus prepared, I had nothing to do but to write it down."

This has not more excited the surprize of the literary world than, that so exquisite a poem should have been produced by one so untutored by art, and so great a stranger to scholastic learning; particularly as they understand the methods used by authors to catch and retain the flying thought. Thus Milton, when blind, used to employ his three daughters, alternately, to pen down his sublime thoughts. The deserted Savage, when precluded by poverty from the convenience of pen, ink, and paper, used to study in the streets, and go into shops to record the productions of his fertile genius. Pope, when on visits at Lord Bolingbroke's used to ring up the domestics at any hour of the night, for pen and ink, to record any thought that struck his refined imagination. Most singular was the method of Bloomfield, when contrasted with these.

When he had finished his poem, he submitted it to the opinion of some persons in London. But, either from a total want of taste, or of liberality, they examined the poem with an apathy worthy only of ignorance, and regarded the poet with an indifference that fully evinced their utter unworthiness of the honor done them.—The greater part of mankind are but as overgrown children, and their attention must be engaged either by a sounding name or the gilded trappings of vanity. At length, he happily got his poem into the hands of Mr. Capel Lofft, a gentleman and a scholar, possessing a mind competent to define the merits of a literary work, and a heart generously disposed to foster genius, although dwelling in a Farmer's Boy, and to clear a path to its deserved reward.—Mr. Lofft read it, and approved it. He had, at first, an apprehension that it was one of those vain and injudicious attempts that had been made before, of transmuting the noble poem of Thomson's Seasons into rhyme; but, on reading it he was most agreeably deceived.—"I had soon," says he, the pleasure of finding myself relieved from that apprehension, and of discovering that, although the delineation of rural scenery naturally branches itself into those divisions, there was little else except the general qualities of a musical ear, flowing numbers, feeling piety, poetic imagery, and animation; a taste for the picturesque, a true sense of the natural and pathetic force of thought and liveliness of imagination which were in common between Thomson and this author." When Mr. Lofft had indulged himself in contemplating the beauties of the Farmer's Boy, he sent it to an eminent literary friend, who read it with the highest satisfaction, and who instantly communicated his opinion of it to the publishers, Messrs. Vernor & Hood, of the Poultry. They accepted it upon terms honorable to themselves, and satisfactory to its author, and Mr. Lofft in his behalf. This latter gentleman kindly undertook the task of preparing and revising the sheets for the press. He found it necessary to make a few trifling corrections in the orthography, and in the grammatical construction; but not a line is added, or substantially altered through the whole poem. The first edition was published in March 1800, and its subsequent success, and numerons editions, at once confirm the merit of its author, and the taste of his patron.

The Farmer's Boy was no sooner introduced to the public, than he was admired and received by every person who claimed any pretention to taste. Mr. Rorbret Bloomfield found numerous patrons, who poured upon him their praises, and their presents. Among these were some persons of the first distinction; as, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, the Duke of Grafton, Sir Charles Bunbury, &c, and while rank and title were paying him the homage ever due to genius, the learned world were no less forward in exalting him in their public commendations; particularly Dr. Drake, who in his Literary Hours has written a masterly critique upon the Farmer's Boy.

The consequence of this deserved success was, that Mr. Bloomfield soon emerged from poverty and obscurity, and began to feel the blessings of ease and fortune.

Twelve years had elapsed, since he trod his native ground, and saw his dear relations, and during this long interval his desires had increased to accomplish this event, which, now the gloomy barrier of poverty being removed, he put in execution, and enjoyed the sweet satisfaction of embracing, in health, his aged mother, and of presenting to her, with his own hand, a copy of his poem.

"My heart was rous'd; and Fancy on the wing,
Thus heard the language of enchanting SPRING:
'Come to thy native groves and fruitful fields,
Thou know'st the fragrance that the wild flow'r yields,
Inhale the breeze that bends the purple bud,
And plays along the margin of the wood.
I've cloth'd them all, the very woods where thou
In infancy learn'dst praise from every bough.
Wouldst thou again behold the vernal day?
My reign is short: this instant come away;
Ere Philomel shall silent meet the morn,
She hails the green, but not the rip'ning corn.
Come, ere the pastures lose their yellow flow'rs;
Come now with heart as jocund as the hours.'
Who could resist the call?"- - - - - - -

He was received in the country with every mark of respect; for his fame had travelled before him, and persons of every station, from the nobleman to the peasant, thought it an honor to share the company of the Farmer's Boy.

The demand for this delightful poem still remains unceasing, and the author has enjoyed the satisfaction of finding it translated into the Latin, French, and Italian languages.

He has since produced his "Rural Tales," and very lately a volume, entitled, "Wild Flowers," a work not less marked for its sweet simplicity than the former, and which has been received with the greatest success.

Mr. Robert Bloomfield is, in his disposition, mild, amiable, and feeling, as his works will sufficiently evince. His person is slender, and about five feet four in height; his complexion very dark; his features by no means vivacious, but marked with thought. He is at present about thirty-nine years old, and he has, we believe, a family of four children.

SELECTED POETRY.

BEAUTY'S TEAR.

I talk'd of the woes of the days that are past—
  Of afflictions and trials severe ;
How the May-morn of life was with storms overcast,
How the blossoms of Hope were all nipt by the blast ;
  And Beauty sat listening to hear :

Of hardships and dangers, and many a wrong,
  And of toils that beset me so near ;
Of Treachery's snare, and Ingratitude's tongue ;
I told :—and 'twas pleasant the tale to prolong—
  For Beauty repaid with a tear.

Ah ! soft form of Beauty, that gladdens the soul !
  Is aught as thy sympathy dear—
When thy bright beaming eyes with benignity roll,
When heaves thy full bosom at Pity's controul,
  And thy roses are wash'd with a tear ?

When dark roll the clouds that o'ershadow our doom,
  When toil and when dangers appear ;—
When the storm-threat'ning waves all their terrors assume ;
Then the sun-beam of Hope that can break through the gloom,
  O Beauty ! must shine through a tear.

Yes, Beauty—thy tear, that from sympathy flows,
  To manhood shall ever be dear ;
'Tis the balm of all ill, and the cure of all woes ;
And the heart-rankling wounds of remembrance shall close,
  That Beauty has wash'd with a tear.

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THE DOOR THAT OPES WITH A LATCH.

BY CLIO RICKMAN.

Fine folks, and fine houses, are nothing to me ;
  Nor care I for splendor or state ;
From fashion and nonsense I wish to be free,
  And the purse-proud and crafty I hate :
But I love all the charms to the cot that attach,
Where the door of rusticity opes with a latch.

Crowded cities are full of unnatural hordes,
  Where folly and fuss and misery combine ;
Full of pompous professions, and unmeaning words,
  Where truth is kick'd out, for the frothy and fine :
O bear me from these to the cot crown'd with thatch,
Where the door of simplicity opes with a latch.

O bear me from these to the hamlet's dear green,
  Where mirth gaily leads on the hours ;
Where nature exhibits each beautiful scene,
  And melody gladdens the bowers.
The parting sun's ray o'er yon downs let me catch,
Then repose in the cot whose door opes with a latch.

Dear simplicity, too, of mind and of mien—
  Most charming of qualities—flourishes here :
Here beauty bright blazes ; and true love its queen,
  Lights up in the breast each affection sincere.

Forever far hence be the money-made match !
Nor the cottage pollute whose door opes with a latch.

The greatest of foes to the good of mankind
Was he who two houses adjoining first built :
Then to town, and town-manners, away flew the hind,
To finery, disquiet, slavery, and guilt ;—
To cities repair'd, ev'ry mischief to hatch,
And left honesty's roof, and the door with a latch.

How hateful the sound of the thundering hall,
Where impudent lackies, and ladies, and lords,
Be-gilt and be-painted, affectedly squall ;
Unhealthy, and solemn, no hearts, and all words ;
With trouble and pain each disquiet they hatch,
Such as reach not the roof whose door opes with a latch.

Here, too—at the close of the busier day,
When the bright orb of glory descends in the west,
And steals to the tomb a lingering ray—
Where my soul's early partner retir'd to her rest,
Let me dwell on her virtues, which nothing can match,
Then retire to a cot whose door opes with a latch.

Oh, grant me, from noise and cabal far away,
With the children of lowly pursuits to abide ;
O'er the uplands, the woods, and the downs, let me stray,
'Midst Nature's fine scenery, and with her reside :
Exult in her beauties, her glowing tints catch,
As I sit at my door, that still opes with a latch.

Blest scenes ! each domestic delight to improve,
To give vigour to all the emotions of heart ;
Nurse of sentiment, taste, and the raptures of love ;
To me and to mine, oh ! your blessings impart :
Night, morning, and noon, all your charms will I watch,
Nor the mansion e'er quit whose door opes with a latch.

HUNTING SONG.

As health, rosy health, from cheerfulness flows,
And sloth draws old age on apace,
To avoid sad disease, and such mortal foes,
By cheerfully joining the chace,
To the woods then let's haste—Diana invites,
And thus does the goddess report—
"If you wish to gain health, with much joy and delight,
"Mount your coursers, and follow the sport."

For nature, gay nature, imparts in the chase,
Those charms which but hunters enjoy,
There we see a strong picture of life's eager race,
In a pastime that never can cloy :
Then at night, when the chase has bestow'd all its charms,
And we're snug o'er the joy-giving bowl,
To repose we retire, in beauty's soft arms,
Where transports envelope the soul.

EPITAPH UPON NEWTON.

BY COLPANI.

Enterred beneath this marble *Newton* lies—
Wouldst thou know more ? question the *earth* and *skies*.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MONASTIC MUMMERY.

The following notice of the Monks of Erbach, appears in Render's Tour through Germany :—

"I am inadequate to the task of describing as I could wish the life of poverty, as it is called, which the monks lead in this convent. It is the richest in all Germany; and the travellers who visit it are astonished at the princely and luxurious life of its inhabitants. They have an excellent pack of hounds, with a stable of fine hunters; apartments magnificently furnished; a dozen of beautiful singing girls; and their wine-cellar excites the utmost astonishment. A coach and four might easily drive round the cellar, and turn in it with the greatest facility. The number of large full casks is really amazing, each being about seventeen or eighteen feet in height. They have six fine billiard tables, which are contained in three large rooms; and, besides all this, an excellent band of musicians. Their hospitality towards foreigners and strangers is surprising; and a traveller scarcely meets with such a reception in any other part of the globe. I call them fat monks, there being very few among them who do not weigh sixteen or eighteen stone, and several even exceed that. But it is at the same time equally surprising, how they keep the common people in ignorance. One instance shall suffice for the many which I saw. Before the dinner was served, to which we were invited by the Prelate, we had sufficient time to take a walk in an adjacent wood, where the monks pretend to work miracles, and to which thousands of the people of distant Roman Catholic countries make pilgrimages annually. The palace in the wood where these miracles are wrought, is called *Hulfe Gotters*, i. e. "God's Help,"—it ought to be called a place for deception and blasphemy. According to the legend, a small wooden crucifix of the Saviour was carelessly stuck in a hollow tree, where it remained for a long time, crying, "God help me! God help me!" At length a friar came, and removed the cause of the piteous exclamation; since which, the crucifix has performed innumerable miracles. Every pilgrim who pays a visit to it is obliged to bestow some donation; as a compensation for which, he receives some picture or relique from the monks; by which means they accumulate a very large annual revenue. On our return, dinner was served. It consisted of two courses, each of about 32 covers; and a dessert, served up in a princely style. Every monk at Erbach, has four bottles of the best wine for his daily allowance to drink *ad libitum*. Before we set off for Geisenheim, the prelate shewed us his private stables, magnificent carriages, and pack of hounds; it is not in my power to describe the luxurious life of these debauched hypocrites, suffice it to say, there are few princes able to vie with them."

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[The following whimsical article appears to be a satire upon the affected Virtuoso; a character, however uncommon in America, which frequently excites the wonder or provokes the ridicule of the European satirist. In one of Shadwell's forgotten plays, the character of Sir Nicholas Gimcrack will cause the reader more mirth, perhaps, than the following. In Addison's papers some exquisite sarcasms of a similar nature may be found.]

CURIOSITIES FOUND IN THE HISTORICAL HERCULANEUM.

The original manuscript of Paridise Lost, in Milton's own hand writing, which is very curious, as the bard was blind.

Rabelais' easy chair, some years ago in the possession of Dean Swift, of which Pope makes honorable mention;* lately occupied by a facetious humorist, one Laurence Sterne.

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* O thou, whatever title please thine ear,
Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver;
Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,
Or laugh and shake in *Rabelais' easy chair*.

Dr. Johnson's buzz wig.

The right thumb of Charles the Twelfth, with which he used to spread his butter.

Tom Brown's tobacco stopper, and the handle of Sam Butler's ale-pot.

Erasmus' spatterdashes, which he wore in all his journeys.

The trunk hose of Sir Francis Drake; two or three stitches dropt, and four buttons wanting.

A very curious frying-pan, in which Pope drest his lampreys.

The oaken towel of the Spectator's trunk-maker.

A comb for the whiskers, left as a legacy by the great Cervantes to his jailor's daughter.

Tom Thumb; an heroic poem; in which it is proved that this hero was son to William the Conqueror, and the inventor of shooting ducks with a mile-stone. Neatly bound in cock's combs, and illumed with tails of glow-worms. Very scarce.

John Dennis' snuff-box.

A tragedy in twenty-four acts, each containing fifty-two scenes: title lost.

Travels to the source of the Nile, which describe that river as an oyster-bed enamelled with crocodiles.

Procustes' cupping glass; and Hector Boethius' pamphlet on salvation, printed by Cornelius Agrippa at his press in the Hebrides.

The Art of Cuckold-making, or Great Horn Book; to which is added, a beautiful print of Helen's modesty, a rough sketch.

An essay on pickling snail-shells, Phenixes, and battering rams; with instructions for preparing conserve for gunpowder and roasted bullets.

Carolan's bagpipe, and Philemon Holland's nut-cracker.

The left ear of Daniel Defoe, preserved in spirits of pillory.

Queen Elizabeth's under petticoat of flannel, very bare.

A piece of the walls of Babylon.

The gridiron on which Ben Jonson toasted his figs; the carving knife of Bryan Borooh; Julius Cæsar's tooth-pick; and the great toe of the witch of Endor.

Boileau one day met the servant of his friend who had been long and frequently afflicted with the gout. On enquiring how his master was, whom he knew to be of an irritable temper, the valet replied that his master was then under a fit of his old complaint. He swears a good deal, then, observed the poet. O yes, Sir, said the servant, with simplisity it is the only comfort poor master has in his illness.

The man of great genius is the first person to discover his own faults, and the last to pardon them. Of all the criticisms, observed Boileau one day, which hurt me the most, are those which my own jugdement makes on my own works.

The transmigration of souls, says the sprightly Goldsmith, is no doubt false and whimsical; but nothing can be more certain than the transmigration of bodies: the spoils of the meanest reptile may go to the formation of a prince, and, on the contrary, as the poet has it, the body of Cæsar may be employed in stopping a beer barrel.

DEATHS.

In Danvers, Miss Hannah Goldthwait, daughter of Nathaniel Goldthwait, aged 18.

In this town, Mr. Atwater Phippen æt. 81.—Mr. John Eden, aged 82.—Mrs. Colby, aged 24.——Mrs. Maria Orne Tucker, wife of Ichabod Tucker, Esq. aged 31.—Mrs. Eliza Smith, aged 24, wife of Capt. Ezra Smith.